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THE  
JOURNAL  
OF

MAJOR *George Washington*,

SENT BY THE  
Hon. ROBERT DINWIDDIE, Esq;  
His Majesty's Lieutenant-Governor, and  
Commander in Chief of *Virginia*,

TO THE  
COMMANDANT of the *French* Forces

O H I O.

To which are added, the  
GOVERNOR'S LETTER;

AND A  
TRANSLATION of the *French* Officer's Answer

WITH  
A New MAP of the Country as far as the  
MISSISSIPPI.

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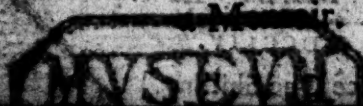
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ADVERTISEMENT.

**A***S it was thought adviseable by his Honour the Governor to have the following Account of my Proceedings to and from the French on Ohio, committed to Print; I think I can do no less than apologize, in some Measure, for the numberless Imperfections of it.*

*There intervened but one Day between my Arrival in Williamsburg, and the Time for the Council's Meeting, for me to prepare and transcribe, from the rough Minutes I had taken in my Travels, this Journal; the writing of which only was sufficient to employ me closely the whole Time, consequently admitted of no Leisure to consult of a new and proper Form to offer it in, or to correct or amend the Diction of the old: Neither was I apprised, nor did in the least conceive,*  
when



## ADVERTISEMENT.

When I wrote this for his Honour's Perusal, that it ever would be published, or even have more than a cursory Reading; till I was informed, at the Meeting of the present General Assembly, that it was already in the Press.

There is nothing can recommend it to the Public, but this. Those Things which came under the Notice of my own Observation, I have been explicit and just in a Recital of:—Those which I have gathered from Report, I have been particularly cautious not to augment, but collected the Opinions of the several Intelligencers, and selected from the whole, the most probable and consistent Account.

G. WASHINGTON.



( )

and John Smith, Indian Trader, Henry Stier-  
ord, and William Jambor, and in Company with

W. J. informed that the Express had been  
sent a few Days before to the Traders down the  
River, to acquaint them with the French's  
Death, and the Return of the major part of the  
French Army into Winter Quarters.

THE  
JOURNAL, &c.

the loss of a canoe from Paris, and to land  
the French and the  
the loss of Ohio, about 10 miles, from the  
the river.

( )

Wednesday, October 31st, 1753.

As the French  
the river.

I WAS commissioned and appointed by  
the Honourable Robert Dinwiddie, Esq;  
Governor, &c. of Virginia, to visit and  
deliver a Letter to the Commandant of  
the French Forces on the Ohio, and set out on the  
intended Journey the same Day: The next, I arrived  
at Fredericksburg, and engaged Mr. Jacob Van-  
braam, to be my French Interpreter; and proceed-  
ed with him to Alexandria, where we provided  
Necessaries. From thence we went to Winchester,  
and got Baggage, Horses, &c. and from thence  
we pursued the new Road to Wills-Creek, where  
we arrived the 14th of November.

Here I engaged Mr. Gist to pilot us out, and  
also hired four others as Servitors, Barnaby Currin,

and

and *John Mac-Quire*, Indian Traders, *Henry Steward*, and *William Jenkins* ; and in Company with those Persons, left the Inhabitants the Day following.

The excessive Rains and vast Quantity of Snow which had fallen, prevented our reaching Mr. *Frazier's*, an Indian Trader, at the Mouth of *Turtle-Creek*, on *Monongabela* [River] till *Thursday* the 22d. We were informed here, that Expresses had been sent a few Days before to the Traders down the River, to acquaint them with the *French* General's Death, and the Return of the major Part of the *French* Army into Winter Quarters.

The Waters were quite impassable, without swimming our Horses ; which obliged us to get the Loan of a Canoe from *Frazier*, and to send *Barnaby Currin*, and *Henry Steward*, down the *Monongabela*, with our Baggage, to meet us at the Forks of *Ohio*, about 10 Miles, there to cross the *Aligany*.\*

As I got down before the Canoe, I spent some Time in viewing the Rivers, and the Land in the Fork ; which I think extremely well situated for a Fort, as it has the absolute Command of both Rivers. The Land at the Point is 20 or 25 Feet above the common Surface of the Water ; and a considerable Bottom of flat, well-timbered Land all around it, very convenient for Building : The Rivers are each a Quarter of a Mile, or more, across, and run here very near at right Angles ; *Aligany* bearing N. E. and *Monongabela* S. E. The former of these two is a very rapid and swift running Water ; the other deep and still, without any perceptible Fall.

About two Miles from this, on the South East Side of the River, at the Place where the *Ohio*

\* The *Ohio* and *Aligany* are the same River.

Company intended to erect a Fort, lives *Sbingis*, King of the *Delawares*: We called upon him, to invite him to Council at the *Loggs-Town*.

As I had taken a good deal of Notice Yesterday of the Situation at the *Forks*, my Curiosity led me to examine this more particularly, and I think it greatly inferior, either for Defence or Advantages; especially the latter: For a Fort at the *Forks* would be equally well situated on the *Ohio*, and have the entire Command of the *Monongabela*; which runs up to our Settlements and is extremely well designed for Water Carriage, as it is of a deep still Nature. Besides a Fort at the *Fork* might be built at a much less Expence, than at the other Place.—

Nature has well contrived this lower Place, for Water Defence; but the Hill whereon it must stand being about a Quarter of a Mile in Length, and then descending gradually on the Land Side, will render it difficult and very expensive, to make a sufficient Fortification there.—The whole Flat upon the Hill must be taken-in, the Side next the Descent made extremely high, or else the Hill itself cut away: Otherwise, the Enemy may raise Batteries within that Distance without being exposed to a single Shot from the Fort.

*Sbingis* attended us to the *Loggs-Town*, where we arrived between Sun-setting and Dark, the 25th Day after I left *Williamsburg*. We travelled over some extreme good and bad Land, to get to this Place.—

As soon as I came into Town, I went to *Mona-katoocha* (as the Half-king was out at his hunting-Cabbin on little *Beaver-Creek*, about 15 Miles off) and informed him by *John Davison* my Indian Interpreter, that I was sent a Messenger to the *French* General; and was ordered to call upon the *Sachems* of the *Six Nations*, to acquaint them with it.—



it.—I gave him a String of Wampum †, and a Twist of Tobacco, and desired him to send for the Half-King; which he promised to do by a Runner in the Morning, and for other Sachems.—I invited him and the other great Men present to my Tent, where they stay'd about an Hour and return'd.

According to the best Observations I could make, Mr. Giff's new Settlement (which we pass'd by) bears about W. N. W. 70 Miles from *Wills-Creek*; *Shanapins*, or the Forks N. by W. or N. N. W. about 50 Miles from that; and from thence to the *Loggs-Town*, the Course is nearly West about 18 or 20 Miles: So that the whole Distance, as we went and computed it, is at least 135 or 140 Miles from our back Inhabitants.

25<sup>th</sup>, Came to Town four or ten *Frenchmen* who had deserted from a Company at the *Kuskuskas*, which lies at the Mouth of this River. I got the following Account from them. They were sent from *New-Orleans* with 100 Men, and 8 Canoe-Loads of Provisions to this Place; where they expected to have met the same Number of Men, from the Forts on this Side Lake *Erie*, to convoy them and the Stores up, who were not arrived when they ran-off.

I enquired into the Situation of the *French*, on the *Mississippi*, their Number, and what Forts they had built. They inform'd me, That there were four small Forts between *New-Orleans* and the *Black-Islands*, garrison'd with about 30 or 40 Men, and a few small Pieces in each: That at *New-Orleans*, which is near the Mouth of the *Mississippi*, there are 35 Companies, of 40 Men each, with a pretty strong Fort mounting 8 Carriage Guns; and at the *Black-Islands* there are several Companies, and a Fort with 6 Guns. The *Black-Islands* are

† A kind of Indian Money; also given as a Present or Mark of Friendship.

about 130 Leagues above the Mouth of the *Ohio*, which is about 350 above *New-Orleans*. They also acquainted me, that there was a small palisado'd Fort on the *Ohio*, at the Mouth of the *Obaish* about 60 Leagues from the *Mississipi*. The *Obaish* \* heads near the West End of *Lake Erie*, and affords the Communication between the *French* on *Mississipi* and those on the *Lakes*. These Deserters came up from the lower *Shanoab* Town with one *Brown*, an *Indian* Trader, and were going to *Philadelphia*.

About 3 o'Clock this Evening the Half-King came to Town. I went up and invited him with *Davison*, privately, to my Tent; and desir'd him to relate some of the Particulars of his Journey to the *French* Commandant, and Reception there; Also to give me an Account of the Ways and Distance. He told me, that the nearest and levellest Way was now impassable, by Reason of many large mirey Savannas; that we must be obliged to go by *Venango*, and should not get to the near Fort under 5 or 6 Nights Sleep, good Travelling. When he went to the Fort, he said he was received in a very stern Manner by the late Commander; Who ask'd him very abruptly, what he had come about, and to declare his Business: Which he said he did in the following Speech.

*Fathers, I am come to tell you your own Speeches; what your own Mouths have declared. Fathers, You, in former Days, set a Silver Bason before us, wherein there was the Leg of a Beaver, and desir'd all the Nations to come and eat of it; to eat in Peace and Plenty, and not to be churlish to one another: And that if any such Person should be found to be a Disturber, I here lay down by the Edge of the Dish a*

\* Or *Wabash*, written by the *French* *Cuabach*.

*Rod, which you must scourge them with; and if I your Father, should get foolish, in my old Days, I desire you may use it upon me as well as others.*

*Now Fathers, it is you who are the Disturbers in this Land, by coming and building your Towns; and taking it away unknown to us, and by Force.*

*Fathers, We kindled a Fire a long Time ago, at a Place called Montreal, where we desired you to stay, and not to come and intrude upon our Land. I now desire you may dispatch to that Place; for be it known to you, Fathers, that this is our Land, and not yours.*

*Fathers, I desire you may hear me in Civilness; if not, we must handle that Rod which was laid down for the Use of the abstreperous. If you had come in a peaceable Manner, like our Brothers the English, we should not have been against your trading with us, as they do; BUT TO COME, FATHERS, AND BUILD HOUSES UPON OUR LAND, AND TO TAKE IT BY FORCE, IS WHAT WE CANNOT SUBMIT TO.*

*Fathers, Both you and the English are white, we live in a Country between; therefore the Land belongs to neither one nor t'other: But the Great Being above allow'd it to be a Place of Residence for us; so Fathers, I desire you to withdraw, as I have done our Brothers the English: For I will keep you at Arms length. I lay this down as a Trial for both, to see which will have the greatest Regard to it, and that Side we will stand by, and make equal Sharers with us. Our Brothers the English have heard this, and I come now to tell it to you; for I am not afraid to discharge you off this Land.*

*This he said was the Substance of what he spoke to the General, who made this Reply.*

*Now*



*Now my Child, I have heard your Speech: You spoke first, but it is my Time to speak now. Where is my Wampum that you took away, with the Marks of Towns in it? This Wampum I do not know, which you have discharged me off the Land with: But you need not put yourself to the Trouble of speaking, for I will not hear you. I am not afraid of Flies, or Musquitos, for Indians are such as those. I tell you, down that River I will go, and will build upon it, according to my Command. If the River was block'd up, I have Forces sufficient to burst it open, and tread under my Feet all that stand in Opposition, together with their Alliances; for my Force is as the Sand upon the Sea Shore: Therefore, here is your Wampum, I fling it at you. Child, you talk foolish; you say this Land belongs to you, but there is not the Black of my Nail yours. I saw that Land sooner than you did, before the Shannoabs and you were at War: Lead was the Man who went down, and took Possession of that River: It is my Land, and I will have it, let who will stand-up for, or say-against, it. I'll buy and sell with the English, (mockingly). If People will be rul'd by me, they may expect Kindness, but not else.*

The Half-King told me he enquired of the General after two *Englishmen* who were made Prisoners, and received this Answer.

*Child, You think it is a very great Hardship that I made Prisoners of those two People at Venango. Don't you concern yourself with it: We took and carried them to Canada, to get Intelligence of what the English were doing in Virginia.*

He informed me that they had built two Forts, one on Lake Erie, and another on French-Creek,

near a small Lake about 15 Miles asunder, and a large Waggon Road between: They are both built after the same Model, but different in the Size; that on the Lake the largest. He gave me a Plan of them, of his own drawing.

The *Indians* enquired very particularly after their Brothers in *Carolina* Goal.

They also asked what Sort of a Boy it was who was taken from the *South-Branch*; for they were told by some *Indians*, that a Party of *French Indians* had carried a white Boy by the *Kuskuska* Town, towards the Lakes.

26th. We met in Council at the *Long-House*, about 9 o'Clock, where I spoke to them as follows.

*Brothers, I have called you together in Council, by Order of your Brother the Governor of Virginia, to acquaint you, that I am sent, with all possible Dispatch, to visit, and deliver a Letter to the French Commandant, of very great Importance to your Brothers the English; and I dare say, to you their Friends and Allies.*

*I was desired, Brothers, by your Brother the Governor, to call upon you, the Sachems of the Nations, to inform you of it, and to ask your Advice and Assistance to proceed the nearest and best Road to the French. You see, Brothers, I have gotten thus far on my Journey.*

*His Honour likewise desired me to apply to you for some of your young Men, to conduct and provide Provisions for us on our Way; and be a Safeguard against those French Indians who have taken up the Hatchet against us. I have spoke this particularly to you, Brothers, because his Honour our Governor treats you as good Friends and Allies; and holds you in great Esteem.*

*Esteem. To confirm what I have said, I give you this String of Wampum.*

After they had considered for some Time on the above Discourse, the Half-King got up and spoke.

*Now, my Brothers, in Regard to what my Brother the Governor has desired me, I return you this Answer.*

*I rely upon you as a Brother ought to do, as you say we are Brothers and one People: We shall put Heart in Hand, and speak to our Fathers the French concerning the Speech they made to me; and you may depend that we will endeavour to be your Guard.*

*Brother, as you have asked my Advice, I hope you will be ruled by it, and stay till I can provide a Company to go with you. The French Speech-Belt is not here, I have it to go for to my hunting-Cabbin: Likewise the People whom I have ordered in, are not yet come, nor cannot till the third Night from this; till which Time, Brother, I must beg you to stay.*

*I intend to send a Guard of Mingo's, Shannoahs, and Delawares, that our Brothers may see the Love and Loyalty we bear them.*

As I had Orders to make all possible Dispatch, and waiting here was very contrary to my Inclination, I thanked him in the most suitable Manner I could; and told him, that my Business required the greatest Expedition, and would not admit of that Delay. He was not well pleased that I should offer to go before the Time he had appointed, and told me, that he could not consent to our going without a Guard, for Fear some Accident should befall us, and draw a Reflection upon him. Besides, says he, this is a Matter of no small Moment, and must

not



not be entered into without due Consideration : For now I intend to deliver up the *French-Speech-Belt*, and make the *Shannoahs* and *Delawares* do the same. And accordingly he gave Orders to King *Shingifs*, who was present, to attend on *Wednesday* Night with the Wampum; and two Men of their Nation to be in Readiness to set-out with us next Morning. As I found it was impossible to get-off without affronting them in the most egregious Manner, I consented to stay.

I gave them back a String of Wampum which I met with at Mr. *Frezier's*, and which they had sent with a Speech to his Honour the Governor, to inform him, that three Nations of *French Indians*, viz. *Chippoways*, *Ottoways*, and *Orundaks*, had taken-up the Hatchet against the *English*; and desired them to repeat it over again : But this they postponed doing till they met in full Council with the *Shannoahs* and *Delaware* Chiefs.

27th. Runners were dispatched very early for the *Shannoah* Chiefs. The Half-King set out himself to fetch the *French-Speech-Belt* from his hunting Cabbin.

28th. He returned this Evening, and came with *Monokatoocha*, and two other Sachems to my Tent; and begged (as they had complied with his Honour the Governor's Request, in providing Men, &c.) to know on what Business we were going to the *French*? this was a Question I all along expected, and had provided as satisfactory Answers to, as I could; which allayed their Curiosity a little.

*Monokatoocha* informed me, that an *Indian* from *Venango* brought News, a few Days ago, that the *French* had called all the *Mingo's*, *Delawares*, &c. together at that Place; and told them, that they intended

intended to have been down the River this Fall; but the Waters were growing cold, and the Winter advancing, which obliged them to go into Quarters: But that they might assuredly expect them in the Spring, with a far greater Number; and desired that they might be quite passive, and not to intermeddle, unless they had a Mind to draw all their Force upon them: For that they expected to fight the *English* three Years (as they supposed there would be some Attempts made to stop them) in which Time they should conquer: But that if they should prove equally strong, they and the *English*, would join to cut them all off, and divide the Land between them: That though they had lost their General, and some few of their Soldiers, yet there were Men enough to reinforce them, and make them Masters of the *Ohio*.

This Speech, he said, was delivered to them by one Captain *Joncaire* their Interpreter in Chief, living at *Venango*, and a Man of Note in the Army.

29th. The Half-King and *Monokatoocha*, came very early, and begged me to stay one Day more: For notwithstanding they had used all the Diligence in their Power, the *Sbanoah* Chiefs had not brought the Wampum they ordered, but would certainly be in To-night; if not, they would delay me no longer, but would send it after us as soon as they arrived. When I found them so pressing in their Request, and knew that returning of Wampum was the abolishing of Agreements; and giving this up, was shaking-off all Dependence upon the *French*, I consented to stay, as I believed an Offence offered at this Crisis, might be attended with greater ill Consequence, than another Day's Delay. They also informed me, that *Sbingis* could not get-in his Men; and was prevented from coming

ing himself, by his Wife's Sickness, (I believe, by Fear of the *French*), but that the Wampum of that Nation was lodged with *Kustaloga* one of their Chiefs at *Venango*.

In the Evening late they came again and acquainted me that the *Shannoabs* were not yet arrived, but that it should not retard the Prosecution of our Journey. He delivered in my Hearing, the Speeches that were to be made to the *French* by *Jeskakake*, one of their old Chiefs, which was giving-up the Belt the late Commandant had asked for, and repeating near the same Speech he himself had done before.

He also delivered a String of Wampum to this Chief, which was sent by King *Sbingiss*, to be given to *Kustaloga*, with Orders to repair to the *French*, and deliver-up the Wampum.

He likewise gave a very large String of black and white Wampum, which was to be sent up immediately to the Six Nations, if the *French* refused to quit the Land at this Warning; which was the third and last Time, and was the Right of this *Jeskakake* to deliver.

30th. Last Night the great Men assembled to their Council-House, to consult further about this Journey, and who were to go: The Result of which was, that only three of their Chiefs, with one of their best Hunters, should be our Convoy. The Reason they gave for not sending more, after what had been proposed at Council the 26th, was, that a greater Number might give the *French* Suspicions of some bad Design, and cause them to be treated rudely: But I rather think they could not get their Hunters in.

We set out about 9 o'Clock with the Half-King, *Jeskakake*, *White Thunder*, and the Hunter; and travelled



travelled on the Road to *Venango*; where we arrived the 4th of *December*, without any Thing remarkable happening but a continued Series of bad Weather.

This is an old *Indian* Town, situated at the Mouth of *French* Creek on *Ohio*; and lies near N. about 60 Miles from the *Loggs*-Town, but more than 70 the Way we were obliged to go.

We found the *French* Colours hoisted at a House from which they had driven Mr. *John Frazier*, an *English* Subject. I immediately repaired to it, to know where the Commander resided. There were three Officers, one of whom, Capt. *Joncaire*, informed me, that he had the Command of the *Ohio*: But that there was a General Officer at the near Fort, where he advised me to apply for an Answer. He invited us to sup with them; and treated us with the greatest Complaisance.

The Wine, as they dosed themselves pretty plentifully with it, soon banished the Restraint which at first appeared in their Conversation; and gave a Licence to their Tongues to reveal their Sentiments more freely.

They told me, That it was their absolute Design to take Possession of the *Ohio*, and by G— they would do it: For that altho' they were sensible the *English* could raise two Men for their one; yet they knew, their Motions were too slow and dilatory to prevent any Undertaking of theirs. They pretend to have an undoubted Right to the River, from a Discovery made by one *La Solle* 60 Years ago; and the Rise of this Expedition is, to prevent our settling on the River or Waters of it, as they had heard of some Families moving-out in Order thereto. From the best Intelligence I could get, there have been 1500 Men on this Side *Ontario* Lake

**Lake :** But upon the Death of the General all were recalled to about 6 or 700, who were left to gar-  
rison four Forts, 150 or thereabouts in each. The  
first of them is on *French-Creek*, near a small  
Lake, about 60 Miles from *Venango*, near N.N.W.  
the next lies on Lake *Erie*, where the greater Part  
of their Stores are kept, about 15 Miles from the  
other. From this it is 120 Miles to the carrying  
Place, at the Falls of Lake *Erie*, where there is a  
small Fort; which they lodge their Goods at, in  
bringing them from *Montreal*, the Place whence all  
their Stores come from. The next Fort lies about  
20 Miles from this, on *Ontario-Lake*. Between  
this Fort and *Montreal* there are three others, the  
first of which is near opposite to the *English* Fort  
*Oswego*. From the Fort on Lake *Erie* to *Montreal*  
is about 600 Miles, which they say requires no  
more, if good Weather, than four Weeks Voyage,  
if they go in Barks or large Vessels, so that they may  
cross the Lake : But if they come in Canoes it will  
require 5 or 6 Weeks, for they are obliged to keep  
under the Shore.

5<sup>th</sup>. Rain'd excessively all Day, which prevented  
our Travelling. Capt. *Joncaire* sent for the Half-  
King, as he had but just heard that he came with me:  
He affected to be much concerned that I did not  
make free to bring them in before. I excused it in  
the best Manner I was capable, and told him, I  
did not think their Company agreeable, as I had  
heard him say a good deal in Dispraise of *Indians* in  
general. But another Motive prevented me from  
bringing them into his Company : I knew he was  
Interpreter, and a Person of very great Influence  
among the *Indians*, and had lately used all possible  
Means to draw them over to their Interest ; there-  
fore I was desirous of giving no Opportunity that  
could be avoided.

When

When they came in, there was great Pleasure expressed at seeing them. He wondred how they could be so near without coming to visit him; made several trifling Presents; and applied Loquor so fast, that they were soon rendred incapable of the Business they came about, notwithstanding the Caution which was given.

6th. The Half-King came to my Tent, quite sober, and insisted very much that I should stay and hear what he had to say to the *French*. I fain would have prevented his speaking any Thing, till he came to the Commandant; but could not prevail. He told me, that at this Place a Council Fire was kindled, where all their Business with these People was to be transacted; and that the Management of the *Indian* Affairs was left solely to Monsieur *Joncaire*. As I was desirous of knowing the Issue of this, I agreed to stay: But sent our Horses a little Way up *French* Creek, to raft over and encamp; which I knew would make it near Night.

About 10 o'Clock they met in Council. The King spoke much the same as he had before done to the General; and offered the *French* Speech-Belt which had before been demanded, with the Marks of four Towns on it, which Monsieur *Joncaire* refused to receive; but desired him to carry it to the Fort to the Commander.

7th. Monsieur *La Force*, Commissary of the *French* Stores, and three other Soldiers came over to accompany us up. We found it extremely difficult to get the *Indians* off To-day, as every Stratagem had been used to prevent their going-up with me. I had last Night left *John Davison* (the *Indian* Interpreter whom I brought with me from Town, and strictly charged him not to be out of their Company, as I could not get them over to



my Tent; for they had some Business with *Kustaloga*, chiefly to know the Reason why he did not deliver up the *French* Belt which he had in Keeping: But I was obliged to send Mr. *Gist* over To-day to fetch them; which he did with great Persuasion.

At 11 o'Clock we set out for the Fort, and were prevented from arriving there till the 11th by excessive Rains, Snows, and bad Travelling, through many Mires and Swamps. These we were obliged to pass, to avoid crossing the Creek, which was impossible, either by fording or rafting, the Water was so high and rapid.

We passed over much good Land since we left *Venango*, and through several extensive and very rich Meadows; one of which I believe was near four Miles in Length, and considerably wide in some Places.

12th. I prepared early to wait upon the Commander, and was received and conducted to him by the second Officer in Command. I acquainted him with my Business, and offered my Commission and Letter: Both of which he desired me to keep till the Arrival of Monsieur *Riparti*, Captain, at the next Fort, who was sent for and expected every Hour.

This Commander is a Knight of the military Order of St. *Lewis*, and named *Legardeur de St. Piere*. He is an elderly Gentleman, and has much the Air of a Soldier. He was sent over to take the Command, immediately upon the Death of the late General, and arrived here about seven Days before me.

At 2 o'Clock the Gentleman who was sent for arrived, when I offered the Letter, &c. again; which they received, and adjourned into a private Apartment for the Captain to translate, who understood

derstood a little *English*. After he had done it, the Commander desired I would walk-in, and bring my Interpreter to peruse and correct it; which I did.

13<sup>th</sup>. The chief Officers retired, to hold a Council of War; which gave me an Opportunity of taking the Dimensions of the Fort, and making what Observations I could.

It is situated on the South, or West Fork of *French* Creek, near the Water; and is almost surrounded by the Creek, and a small Branch of it which forms a Kind of Island. Four Houses compose the Sides. The Bastions are made of Piles driven into the Ground, standing more than 12 Feet above it, and sharp at Top: With Port-Holes cut for Cannon, and Loop-Holes for the small Arms to fire through. There are eight 6 *lb*. Pieces mounted, in each Bastion; and one Piece of four Pound before the Gate. In the Bastions are a Guard-House, Chapel, Doctor's Lodging, and the Commander's private Store: Round which are laid Plat-Forms for the Cannon and Men to stand on. There are several Barracks without the Fort, for the Soldiers Dwelling; covered, some with Bark, and some with Boards, made chiefly of Loggs. There are also several other Houses, such as Stables, Smiths Shop, &c.

I could get no certain Account of the Number of Men here: But according to the best Judgment I could form, there are an Hundred exclusive of Officers, of which there are many. I also gave Orders to the People who were with me, to take an exact Account of the Canoes which were hauled-up to convey their Forces down in the Spring. This they did, and told 50 of Birch Bark, and 170 of Pine; besides many others which were blocked-out, in Readiness to make.

14<sup>th</sup>. As

14<sup>th</sup>. As the Snow encreased very fast, and our Horses daily became weaker, I sent them off unloaded; under the Care of *Barnaby Currin* and two others, to make all convenient Dispatch to *Venango*, and there wait our Arrival, if there was a Posspect of the Rivers freezing; If not, then to continue down to *Sbanapin's* Town, at the Forks of *Ohio*, and there to wait till we came to cross *Aliganey*; intending myself to go down by Water, as I had the Offer of a Canoe or two.

As I found many Plots concerted to retard the *Indians* Business, and prevent their returning with me; I endeavour'd all that lay in my Power to frustrate their Schemes, and hurry them on to execute their intended Design. They accordingly pressed for Admittance this Evening, which at Length was granted them, privately, with the Commander and one or two other Officers. The Half-King told me, that he offer'd the Wampum to the Commander, who evaded taking it, and made many fair Promises of Love and Friendship; said he wanted to live in Peace, and trade amicably with them, as a Proof of which he would send some Goods immediately down to the *Logg's*-Town for them. But I rather think the Design of that is, to bring away all our straggling Traders they meet with, as I privately understood they intended to carry an Officer, &c. with them. And what rather confirms this Opinion, I was enquiring of the Commander, by what Authority he had made Prisoners of several of our *English* Subjects. He told me that the Country belong'd to them; that no *Englishman* had a Right to trade upon those Waters; and that he had Orders to make every Person Prisoner who attempted it on the *Ohio*, or the Waters of it.



I enquir'd of Capt. *Riparti* about the Boy who was carried by this Place, as it was done while the Command devolved on him, between the Death of the late General, and the Arrival of the present. He acknowledged, that a Boy had been carried past; and that the *Indians* had two or three white Men's Scalps, (I wastold by some of the *Indians* at *Venango* Eight) but pretended to have forgotten the Name of the Place which the Boy came from, and all the Particular Facts; though he had question'd him for some Hours, as they were carrying him past. I likewise enquired what they had done with *John Trotter* and *James Mac Clocklan*, two *Pensylvania* Traders, whom they had taken, with all their Goods. They told me, that they had been sent to *Canada*, but were now returned Home.

This Evening I received an Answer to his Honour the Governor's Letter from the Commandant.

15th, The Commandant ordered a plentiful Store of Liquor, Provision, &c. to be put on Board our Canoe; and appeared to be extremely complaisant, though he was exerting every Artifice which he could invent to set our own *Indians* at Variance with us, to prevent their going 'till after our Departure. Presents, Rewards, and every Thing which could be suggested by him or his Officers.—I can't say that ever in my Life I suffer'd so much Anxiety as I did in this Affair: I saw that every Stratagem which the most fruitful Brain could invent, was practised, to win the Half-King to their Interest; and that leaving him here was giving them the Opportunity they aimed at,—I went to the Half-King and press'd him in the strongest Terms to go: He told me the Commandant would not discharge him 'till the Morning. I then went to the Commandant, and desired him to do their Business; and complain'd  
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of ill Treatment: For keeping them, as they were Part of my Company, was detaining me. This he promised not to do, but to forward my Journey as much as he could. He protested he did not keep them, but was ignorant of the Cause of their Stay; though I soon found it out:—He had promised them a present of Guns, &c. if they would wait 'till the Morning.

As I was very much press'd, by the *Indians*, to wait this Day for them, I consented, on a Promise, That nothing should hinder them in the Morning.

16th. The *French* were not slack in their Inventions to keep the *Indians* this Day also: But as they were obligated, according to Promise, to give the Present, they then endeavoured to try the Power of Liquor; which I doubt not would have prevailed at any other Time than this: But I urged and insisted with the King so closely upon his Word, that he refrained, and set-off with us as he had engaged.

We had a tedious and very fatiguing Passage down the Creek. Several Times we had like to have been staved against Rocks; and many Times were obliged all Hands to get-out and remain in the Water Half an Hour or more, getting over the Shoals. At one Place the Ice had lodged and made it impassable by Water; therefore we were obliged to carry our Canoe across a Neck of Land, a Quarter of a Mile over. We did not reach *Venango*, till the 22d, where we met with our Horses.

This Creek is extremely crooked, I dare say the Distance between the Fort and *Venango* can't be less than 130 Miles, to follow the Meanders.

23d, When I got Things ready to set-off, I sent for the Half-King, to know whether he intended to go with us, or by Water. He told me that *White-Thunder* had hurt himself much, and was sick and unable

unable to walk; therefore he was obliged to carry him down in a Canoe. As I found he intended to stay here a Day or two, and knew that Monsieur *Joncaire* would employ every Scheme to set him against the *English* as he had before done; I told him I hoped he would guard against his Flattery, and let no fine Speeches influence him in their Favour. He desired I might not be concerned, for he knew the *French* too well, for any Thing to engage him in their Behalf; and that though he could not go down with us, he yet would endeavour to meet at the Forks with *Joseph Campbell*, to deliver a Speech for me to carry to his Honour the Governor. He told me he would order the young Hunter to attend us, and get Provision, &c. if wanted.

Our Horses were now so weak and feeble, and the Baggage so heavy (as we were obliged to provide all the Necessaries which the Journey would require) that we doubted much their performing it: therefore myself and others (except the Drivers who were obliged to ride) gave-up our Horses for Packs, to assist along with the Baggage. I put myself in an *Indian* walking Dress, and continued with them three Days, till I found there was no Probability of their getting home in any reasonable Time. The Horses grew less able to travel every Day; the Cold increased very fast; and the Roads were becoming much worse by a deep Snow, continually freezing: Therefore as I was uneasy to get back, to make Report of my Proceedings to his Honour the Governor, I determined to prosecute my Journey the nearest Way through the Woods, on Foot.

Accordingly I left Mr. *Vanbraam* in Charge of our Baggage; with Money and Directions, to provide Necessaries from Place to Place for themselves



and Horses, and to make the most convenient Dispatch in Travelling.

I took my necessary Papers ; pulled-off my Cloaths ; and tied myself up in a Match Coat. Then with Gun in Hand and Pack at my Back, in which were my Papers and Provisions, I set-out with Mr. Gist, fitted in the same Manner, on *Wednesday* the 26th. The Day following, just after we had passed a Place called the *Murdering-Town* (where we intended to quit the Path, and steer across the Country for *Shannapins* Town) we fell-in with a Party of *French* Indians, who had lain in Wait for us. One of them fired at Mr. Gist or me, not 15 Steps off, but fortunately missed. We took this Fellow into Custody, and kept him till about 9 o'Clock at Night : Then let him go, and walked all the remaining Part of the Night without making any Stop ; that we might get the Start, so far, as to be out of the Reach of their Pursuit the next Day, since we were well assured they would follow our Tract as soon as it was light. The next Day we continued travelling till quite dark, and got to the River about two Miles above *Shannapins*. We expected to have found the River frozen, but it was not, only about 50 Yards from each Shore : The Ice I suppose had broken up above, for it was driving in vast Quantities.

There was no Way for getting over but on a Raft : Which we-set about, with but one poor Hatchet, and finished just after Sun-setting. This was a whole Day's Work : we next got it launched, and went on Board of it : Then set-off. But before we were Half Way over, we were jammed in the Ice, in such a Manner that we expected every Moment our Raft to sink, and ourselves to perish. I put-out my setting Pole to try to stop the Raft, that the Ice might pass by ; when the Rapidity of the Stream threw it with  
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so much Violence against the Pole, that it jirked me out into ten Feet Water: But I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the Raft Logs. Notwithstanding all our Efforts we could not get the Raft to either Shore; but were obliged, as we were near an Island, to quit our Raft and make to it.

The Cold was so extremely severe, that Mr. *Gist* had all his Fingers, and some of his Toes frozen; and the Water was shut up so hard, that we found no Difficulty in getting-off the Island, on the Ice, in the Morning, and went to Mr. *Frazier's*. We met here with 20 Warriors who were going to the *Southward* to War: But coming to a Place upon the Head of the great *Kunnaway*, where they found seven People killed and scalped (all but one Woman with very light Hair) they turned about and ran back for Fear the Inhabitants should rise and take them as the Authors of the Murder. They report that the Bodies were lying about the House, and some of them much torn and eaten by Hogs: By the Marks which were left, they say they were *French* Indians of the *Ottoway* Nation, &c. who did it.

As we intended to take Horses here, and it required some Time to find them, I went-up about three Miles to the Mouth of *Taugbyaughgane* to visit Queen *Alliquippa*, who had expressed great Concern that we passed her in going to the Fort. I made her a Present of a Matchcoat and a Bottle of Rum; which latter was thought much the best Present of the two.

*Tuesday* the 1st Day of *January*, we left Mr. *Frazier's* House, and arrived at Mr. *Gist's* at *Monongabela* the 2d, where I bought a Horse, Saddle, &c. the 6th we met 17 Horses loaded with Materials and Stores for a Fort at the Forks of *Ohio*, and the Day after some Families going-out to settle:

This Day we arrived at *Wills* Creek, after as fatiguing a Journey as it is possible to conceive, rendered so by excessive bad Weather. From the first Day of *December* to the 15th, there was but one Day on which it did not rain or snow incessantly; and throughout the whole Journey we met with nothing but one continued Series of cold wet Weather, which occasioned very uncomfortable Lodgings; especially after we had quitted our Tent, which was some Screen from the Inclemency of it.

On the 11th I got to *Belvoir*; where I stopped one Day to take necessary Rest; and then set out, and arrived in *Williamsburgh* the 16th; when I waited upon his Honour the Governor with the Letter I had brought from the *French* Commandant; and to give an Account of the Success of my Proceedings. This I beg Leave to do by offering the foregoing Narrative as it contains the most remarkable Occurrences which happened in my Journey.

I hope what has been said will be sufficient to make your Honour satisfied with my Conduct; for that was my Aim in undertaking the Journey, and chief Study throughout the Prosecution of it.

With the Hope of doing it, I, with infinite Pleasure subscribe myself,

Your Honour's most Obedient,

And very humble Servant,

G. Washington.





*COPY of his Honour the GOVERNOR's Letter,  
to the Commandant of the French Forces on  
the OHIO, sent by Major Washington.*

S I R,

**T**HE Lands upon the River *Ohio*, in the Western Parts of the Colony of *Virginia*, are so notoriously known to be the Property of the Crown of *Great-Britain*; that it is a Matter of equal Concern and Surprize to me, to hear that a Body of *French* Forces are erecting Fortresses, and making Settlements upon that River, within his Majesty's Dominions.

The many and repeated Complaints I have received of these Acts of Hostility, lay me under the Necessity, of sending, in the Name of the King my Master, the Bearer hereof, *George Washington*, Esq; one of the Adjutants General of the Forces of this Dominion; to complain to you of the Encroachments thus made, and of the Injuries done to the Subjects of *Great-Britain*, in open Violation of the Law of Nations, and the Treaties now subsisting between the two Crowns.

If these Facts are true, and you shall think fit to justify your Proceedings, I must desire you to acquaint me, by whose Authority and Instructions you have lately marched from *Canada*, with an armed Force; and invaded the King of *Great-Britain's*

*Britain's* Territories, in the Manner complained of? that according to the Purport and Resolution of your Answer, I may act agreeably to the Commission I am honoured with, from the King my Master.

However Sir, in Obedience to my Instructions, it becomes my Duty to require your peaceable Departure; and that you would forbear prosecuting a Purpose so interruptive of the Harmony and good Understanding, which his Majesty is desirous to continue and cultivate with the most Christian King.

I persuade myself you will receive and entertain Major *Washington* with the Candour and Politeness natural to your Nation; and it will give me the greatest Satisfaction, if you return him with an Answer suitable to my Wishes for a very long and lasting Peace between us. I have the Honour to subscribe myself,

S I R,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

ROBERT DINWIDDIE.

*Williamsburg, in Virginia,* }  
*October 31st, 1753.* }

TRANS-



*TRANSLATION of a Letter from Mr.  
Legardeur de St. Piere, a principal French  
Officer, in Answer to the Governor's Letter:*

S I R,

**A**S I have the Honour of commanding here in Chief, Mr. *Washington* delivered me the Letter which you wrote to the Commandant of the *French Troops*.

I should have been glad that you had given him Orders, or that he had been inclined to proceed to *Canada*, to see our General; to whom it better belongs than to me to set-forth the Evidence and Reality of the Rights of the King, my Master, upon the Lands situated along the River *Ohio*, and to contest the Pretensions of the King of *Great-Britain* thereto.

I shall transmit your Letter to the Marquis *Du-guisne*. His Answer will be a Law to me; and if he shall order me to communicate it to you, Sir, you may be assured I shall not fail to dispatch it to you forthwith.

As to the Summons you send me to retire, I do not think myself obliged to obey it: Whatever may be your Instructions, I am here by Virtue of the Orders of my General; and I intreat you, Sir, not to doubt one Moment, but that I am determin'd to conform myself to them with all the Exactness  
and



and Resolution which can be expected from the best Officer.

I don't know that in the Progress of this Campaign any Thing has passed which can be reputed an Act of Hostility, or that is contrary to the Treaties which subsist between the two Crowns; the Continuation whereof as much interests, and is as pleasing to us, as the *English*. Had you been pleased, Sir, to have descended to particularize the Facts which occasioned your Complaint, I should have had the Honour of answering you in the fullest, and, I am persuaded, most satisfactory Manner.

I made it my particular Care to receive Mr. *Washington*, with a Distinction suitable to your Dignity, as well as his own Quality and great Merit. I flatter myself that he will do me this Justice before you, Sir; and that he will signify to you in the Manner I do myself, the profound Respect with which I am,

S I R,

Your most humble, and

most obedient Servant,

LE GARDEUR DE ST. PIERE.



From the Fort sur La Riviere au Beuf,  
the 15th of December 1753.